

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 41 and add claims 42-51 as indicated below. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented) A purgative composition, comprising:
 - (i) at least one water-soluble sodium salt;
 - (ii) at least one water-soluble minimally degradable sugar, wherein the total weight of water-soluble minimally degradable sugar in the composition is from about 1 to about 3 times the weight of sodium salt in the composition;
 - (iii) at least one water-soluble potassium salt, wherein the weight of the water-soluble potassium salt in the composition is from about 0.05 to about 1 times the weight of the sodium salt in the composition; and
 - (iv) at least one water-soluble magnesium salt, wherein the weight of magnesium salt in the composition is from about 0.1 to about 10 times the weight of sodium salt in the composition.
2. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein the minimally degradable sugar is selected from the group consisting of xylose, xylotriose, xylooligosaccharides, fructooligosaccharides, fructosans, galactooligosaccharides, other oligosaccharides, and mixtures thereof.
3. (Previously presented) The compositions of claim 1, wherein the water-soluble sodium salt is selected from the group consisting of sodium chloride, sodium gluconate, sodium citrate, sodium aspartate and mixtures thereof.
4. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein the water-soluble potassium salt is selected from the group consisting of potassium chloride and potassium tartrate.
5. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein the water-soluble magnesium salt is selected from the group consisting of magnesium sulfate, magnesium citrate and magnesium phosphate.
6. (Original) The composition of claim 1 further comprising at least one additive selected from the group consisting of a flavouring ingredient, a detergent stool-softening agent, citrate, lactate, acetate, trace elements and nutritional elements.
7. (Original) The composition of claim 1 in the form of a soup or soup-like composition, tablet, gel cap, capsule or sachet.

8. (Previously presented) The purgative composition of claim 1 in the form of a hypertonic aqueous solution.

9. (Previously presented) The purgative composition of claim 8 in the form of a unit dose having a volume of from about 0.2 to 0.5L and wherein the sodium salt or salts are present in an amount from about 1 to about 10g per unit dose, the minimally degradable sugar or sugars in an amount of from about 2 to about 20g, the potassium salt or salts in an amount of from about 0.5 to about 5g and the magnesium salt or salts in an amount of from about 1 to about 10g per unit dose of the purgative composition.

10. (Previously presented) A method of inducing purgation of the colon of a patient in need thereof, comprising administering to the patient a composition of claim 1 in an amount effective to induce purgation of the patient's colon.

11. (Previously presented) A method of inducing purgation of the colon of a patient in need thereof, comprising administering to the patient a composition of a purgative of claim 8 in an amount effective to induce purgation of the patient's colon.

12. – 36. (Cancelled).

37. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein the minimally degradable sugar is xylose.

38. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, wherein:

- (i) the water-soluble sodium salt comprises sodium chloride;
- (ii) the water-soluble minimally degradable sugar comprises xylose;
- (iii) the water-soluble potassium salt comprises potassium chloride; and
- (iv) the water-soluble magnesium salt comprises magnesium sulfate.

39. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, further comprising one or more further additives selected from among a citrate, a lactate, an acetate, calcium, zinc, Vitamin B complex, thiamine, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, folic acid and biotin.

40. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1, further comprising a detergent stool-softening agent.

41. (Cancelled).

42. (New) The composition of claim 1, further comprising sodium picosulfate.

43. (New) The composition of claim 8, further comprising sodium picosulfate.

44. (New) The composition of claim 1, further comprising bisacodyl.

45. (New) The composition of claim 8, further comprising bisacodyl.

46. (New) The composition of claim 38, further comprising bisacodyl.

47. (New) The composition of claim 1 in the form of a tablet, wherein the tablet comprises:

a core comprising the sodium, potassium and magnesium salts; and

a coating comprising the minimally degradable sugar(s);

wherein the coating surrounds the core.

48. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein the composition is administered in combination with a purgative selected from among sodium picosulfate and bisacodyl.

49. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein the composition is administered in combination with a purgative selected from among sodium picosulfate and bisacodyl.

50. (New) The method of claim 10, wherein:

the water-soluble sodium salt is selected from among sodium chloride, sodium gluconate, sodium citrate and sodium aspartate;

the water-soluble potassium salt is potassium chloride; and

the water-soluble magnesium salt is selected from among magnesium sulfate, magnesium citrate and magnesium phosphate.

51. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein:

the water-soluble sodium salt is selected from among sodium chloride, sodium gluconate, sodium citrate and sodium aspartate;

the water-soluble potassium salt is potassium chloride; and

the water-soluble magnesium salt is selected from among magnesium sulfate, magnesium citrate and magnesium phosphate.

52. (New) The method of claim 50, wherein the composition is administered in combination with a purgative selected from among sodium picosulfate and bisacodyl.

53. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein the composition is administered in combination with a purgative selected from among sodium picosulfate and bisacodyl.